Administrative Office of Courts
ACDD, MIS, Juvenile, & Traffic Divisions

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Welcome

In this edition, we inform you of a new milestone with the AlaFile application. Have you ever wondered how information goes from AlaFile to Alacourt? We will give you an in depth overview. E-transcripts now has training material available online. Finally, cash is a thing of the past, you can now pay fines and other fees at the Clerk's Office using your credit card.

If you have any questions or comments, please email us at newsletter@alacourt.gov.

AlaFile Milestone

AlaFile has just hit its 100K mark on e-orders generated. The system continues to grow across the State as more and more attorneys and court personnel realize the benefits of using the internet for processing paperwork. Of approximately 16,000 attorneys licensed by the Alabama State Bar, almost 5,900 of them have registered with the AlaFile system. The number of newly registered attorneys is growing by an average of 357 per month. If you are a attorney and you are not registered for Ala-File, you can register at the AlaFile website

EDITOR'S CORNER

I appreciate the opportunity given to me to start the Technology Update newsletter two years ago. I have worked with several great people during my time as editor and it has been a great experience professionally. The newsletter opened several door for me to work on other publications, such as the Annual Report and website content.

In the next few months, my wife and I will be moving to Central America as missionaries. We will be working with young people interested in becoming pastors. We will be there for three years, so new editors have been selected to continue bringing you Technology Update.

I turn the newsletter over to three of our newest employees, Candice Harris-Adams, Joey Hunt, and Brenda Tadlock. They all work in Application Support and will have an insider's knowledge of all of the new technologies being introduced to the court system. I encourage you to continue giving your comments and suggestions, so they can provide you with information relevant to you.

Thanks again,
Jeremy Darabaris

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Editors:
Candice Harris-Adams
Joey Hunt
Brenda Tadlock

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Applications Working Together

Many of the applications you utilize on a daily basis are linked together in more ways than you can imagine. They send and receive information from one another in order to complete commands that are given by the user. The e-filing process starts off by users entering in information through the bottom three applications, which are AlaFile, AlaVault, and SJIS. Users may also enter information directly into AlaPay. Once this information is entered in by the users, it goes through the structure below working its way up to the top application, which is Alacourt. The Alacourt application brings the Alabama trial court system right to your desk. On this application, you can access trial court data from each of Alabama's 67 counties. The Alacourt system houses all active case and some disposed cases dated back to the 1970's. This system has become a powerhouse in the legal world, from 1983, when the State's computer system first started.

In figure 1, there is a flow diagram that indicates how applications communicate with one another in the e-filing process. At the bottom of the diagram, there are a total of three applications. The first one is SJIS, which is the mainframe system that takes in data from Clerks. Next, we have the AlaFile application, which takes in data, images and payment information from Attorneys and sends this information to SJIS, AlaVault and AlaPay (Internal), respectively. Lastly, we have AlaVault, which takes in scanned images from Clerks. Eventually, all this information will journey up to the Alacourt application. SJIS, AlaFile, AlaVault and Alacourt are represented by the color blue because they make up the main triangle for the e-filing process. AlaPay handles payment processing. This application processes payments and sends the financial information to Alacourt and receipt information to SJIS. There are two type of AlaPay, one is internal and the other is external. The internal application only process payments sent to it by another application within the e-filing diagram, however users can enter payment information directly into it for processing. The last application that is apart of the e-filing diagram is E-Appellate. This application fits into this e-filing process because it retrieves images from AlaVault, which is the main storage for image files, to construct appeals.

As more and more applications are developed, this diagram will grow larger because information must flow from one system to another in order for various users to have access. The e-filing process, outlined in the diagram, makes it easier and faster to pass information from Attorneys, Clerks and Judges; paperless. Therefore, man hours are saved by allowing the applications, in the e-filing system to work for you. To learn more about Alabama's e-filing process, contact us at applicationsupport@alacourt.gov.
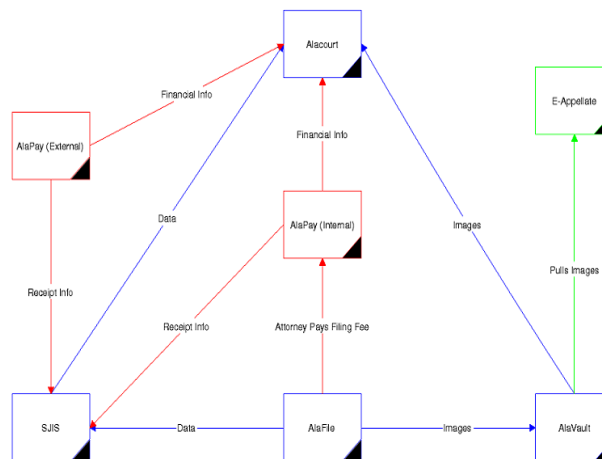
Figure 1
Shows how e-filing applications work together

Transcripts

E-Transcripts is a new application making its way across Alabama. This application allows you to send transcripts to the Alabama Department of Corrections electronically. You can view sample training material by clicking on either the image on the right or left. This material can also be viewed within the E-transcripts application, under the "Training" tab.
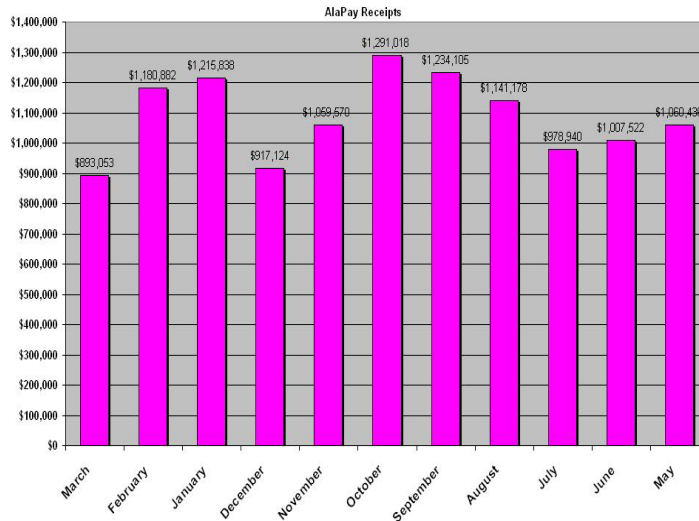
TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

AlaPay v2 Credit Card Receipting in the Clerk's Office.

As we continue to deploy AlaPay v2 - Internal Credit Card Acceptance system, we would like to introduce the system to you, explain the advantages of taking Credit Card Payments from the Clerk's Window and offer you the opportunity to work with us with your feedback on ways to improve the system.

Currently, we have 22 counties that already have Credit Card Swipes and hope to have these available for the remainder of the State by the end of the year. As the swipes are inexpensive and will work with any network connected PC, additional swipes can be placed in all counties. Even in this early stage, the internal use of credit cards is becoming popular. On an average, one out of six credit card transactions are being processed in the Clerk's office using the Credit Card Swipes. So far we have receipted over $20.5

million via AlaPay in Traffic and Criminal alone. Tuscaloosa alone has taken in over $1.4 million for Traffic/Criminal Credit Card payments. While Jefferson County has averaged the most money receipted by Credit Card payments at

over $1.7 million, including e-filing.

The advantages of using AlaPay v2 Internal Credit Card System are Convenience, Internal Control, Modern Convenience and more Revenue for the Clerk's Fund.

Chargebacks

Chargebacks – Payments made using a Credit Card are disputed by the cardholder. This procedure is very simple. However, this does not happen very often. (For the 2006 calendar year, a successful challenge has occurred only .02% of the time) In the event that a cardholder disputes a charge on their credit card, AlaPay will provide information to the card owner concerning the transaction. If the owner continues to contest the charge, we will notify the Clerks office.

Accordingly, the payment should be voided, the disposition removed and other appropriate action taken (FTA, Alias Warrant, etc).

This reversing void entry will

have no effect on your end of the month balances, even if these funds have been previously disbursed.

As these disputed funds were previously deposited in your bank account, refund must now be issued by you to the guarantor of the credit card payments – AlaCourt.

Alacourt.com
Attn: Tony Hoffman
P.O. Box 8147
Mobile, AL 36689

Note: For CHARGEBACKS: You would not issue a refund to the defendant; AlaPay would issue the refund to the Card Holder.

Payments by credit card will

not be accepted for Restitution, Child Support, or Alimony, or for monies ordered to be paid to a third party. (**Per RULE 41, Alabama Rules of Judicial Administration**)

Deployment and setup of this system is very user friendly and can be accomplished very quickly. We will provide the Swipes, Credit Card logos for the Clerk's window, Step by step Instruction Manual, and Policy Manual to include Rule and Statute.

Please contact AOC Application Support if you are interested in signing up for AlaPay v2 or if you have any questions or comments.